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ABSTRACT

In the last 5 years, almost 1.5 million immigrants of German origin have come to Germany. They consider their immigration a return to their homeland. Nevertheless, their social integration is not without problems. Many of the immigrants have little knowledge of German, their values are not related to today's Germany, and Germans increasingly perceive these newcomers as competitors for scarce economic resources. The immigrants' vocational training and work experience does not comply with German requirements, making it more difficult for them to find jobs. More training is required for them to enter most occupations. Unemployment is higher than for native Germans; however, unemployment has increased less among the immigrants than among native Germans because they are willing to accept any type of job. It is likely that more of the immigrants will have to continue to work at occupations below their skills in the future as economic hardships in the country continue. (KC)

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IAB labour market research topics

No. 9

Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung

Institute for Employment Research

B. Koller

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Social and Occupational Integration of Immigrants of German Origin in Germany

- Aussiedlers – repatriates after centuries
- How many are there and where do they come from?
- How is their integration supported?
- Do they feel at home in Germany?
- How successful is their occupational integration?

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The IAB is the research division of the German Bundesanstalt für Arbeit where scientists of different economic and social science disciplines work. The range of research topics can be characterized briefly as follows:

- observation of and forecasts for the German labour market
- labour market statistics
- labour market theory and policy
- evaluation of employment programmes
- regional and international labour markets
- occupation sociology
- research in skills and qualifications
- technological development and the labour market
- business and personnel management

B. Koller*)

SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS OF GERMAN ORIGIN IN GERMANY

0 Abstract

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2 The extent of immigration by ethnic Germans

3 Repatriation of migrants – not an exclusively German phenomenon

4 The integration of Aussiedlers – the many facets of this term

5 Social integration

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*) Researcher of the Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung

0 Abstract

In the last five years alone almost 1.5 million immigrants of German origin have come to Germany. They consider their immigration a return to the country of origin and are prepared to adjust to the new situation. Nevertheless their social integration is not without problems: many of them have no, or insufficient command, of German. Their "German" identity is related to traditional, conservative values that are not to be found in today's Germany and this makes it difficult for them to adapt easily to new behavioural standards. In addition, Germans increasingly perceive these newcomers as competitors for scarce economic resources.

Their vocational training and work experience does not comply with German requirements which makes it more difficult for them to find jobs. In the past this was of least consequence for males working in manual industrial jobs. Females with clerical or office occupations, however, stood almost no chance of finding satisfactory employment without further training. More training is also required for most occupations based on a university education.

No precise unemployment rate can be computed for ethnic German immigrants. Indications, however, are that in general it is higher than for Germans. Unemployment, however, has increased less among ethnic German immigrants than among other Germans in the last two years. It is true, however, that many of these immigrants only find jobs, because they are prepared to accept any type of work, even if it is below their level of qualification. It is probable that even more of them will have to resort to employment below their level of skills in the future: since January 1993 severe cuts have been made in the financial support given for participation in vocational further training measures, designed to permit immigrants of German origin to meet German requirements in their various occupations.

1 Aussiedlers – repatriates of German origin after centuries

For centuries Germans who had emigrated to many regions in southeast Europe and the former USSR coexisted with other ethnic groups without major conflict or extensive integration.

The Hungarian kings for instance as early as the twelfth century started to move German settlers into Transylvania which is now Romania. They were to protect the region against attacks by Tartars and Mongols and received land and guarantees to far-reaching autonomy as compensation. After the 18th century many German settlements were established in the former Austrian-Hungarian double monarchy, in today's Romania, Hungary and the former Yugoslavia. The Habsburg emperors recruited settlers mainly from southwest Germany (Danube-Swabians) to protect the border region against the Turks and to work the land devastated by war.

Some of the predecessors of the migrants who are coming from the former USSR at the moment were sent to Russia by Peter the Great as early as the 17th century. He wanted to

open Russia up towards the rest of Europe and solicited many experts, craftsmen, merchants, scientists and officers from the West and especially from the German principalities to move there. About one hundred years later migrations in significant numbers were caused by an "Invitation Manifesto" of Empress Catherine II, a German princess. She recruited colonists to settle and work the land in the vast empty regions in the Ukraine, on the Black Sea and the Volga-river. In return she promised freedom of religion, exemption from military service, tax relief and extensive autonomy.

The historical background of the immigrants of German origin who come from Poland is different. Many lived in areas that had been populated by Germans and Slavs for centuries and which were subject to frequently changing political influences. In the border regions the various population groups merged. In some areas the majority felt themselves to be Poles, in others as Germans.

Poland 's "shift to the West" is one of the consequences of WW II. In the east the Poles had to surrender a large amount of their territory to the Soviet Union and were compensated for it with German territory leading up to the rivers Oder and Neisse, by the Allies' Potsdam Agreement. This was territory that for centuries had generally belonged to German political entities. After W.W.II a large number of Germans were expelled from these territories. Others were needed as labour and not allowed to leave the country.

The same was true for the areas with mixed populations. The Polish government hoped that they would assimilate in the course of time and prohibited e.g. the use of the German language for many years. Because of this oppression of German culture and of the discrimination they suffered as representatives of the people that had started the war, most Germans in Poland wanted to emigrate to Germany.

The situation and reasons to leave were similar for the Germans in southeast Europe and the USSR. For example in the USSR it was not until 1964 that the Supreme Soviet revoked the general accusation that Russian Germans had collaborated with fascist Germany.

Accepting the immigrants of Germans origin in the Federal Republic of Germany as German citizens is guaranteed by the German constitution. The Federal Law on Expelled Individuals lays down in detail from which countries ethnic Germans will be accepted as "Aussiedler", a special term used to distinguish these immigrants from others.

2 The extent of immigration by ethnic Germans

For many years the numbers of "Aussiedlers" arriving in Germany depended on the conditions prevalent in their countries of origin at the time, i.e. on the number permitted to leave. As from the mid-seventies between 40,000 and 60,000 arrived each year. The significant increase in numbers after the liberalization of the former Eastern Block countries went almost unnoticed. 1988 was the first year in which many more Aussiedlers came to Germany than in previous years, i.e. about 200,000. In the next five years almost 1.5m

Table 1

Aussiedlers According to Selected Structural Characteristics in %

	Number of Aussiedlers who immigrated in the year 1)					For comparison: total population in the FRG, West 2)	
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1991 in m	in %
Absolute number of persons	377,055	397,073	221,995	230,565	218,888	63,9	
in %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		
Men	50.2	49.6	48.7	48.6	48.7		48.4
Women	49.8	50.4	51.3	51.4	51.3		51.6
Country of origin							
former USSR	26.0	37.3	66.4	84.8	94.7		
Poland	66.4	33.7	18.1	7.7	2.5		
Romania	6.2	28.0	14.5	7.0	2.7		
Age groups							
up to 20 years	32.9	29.8	35.2	37.9	38.0		20.7
20 - 25 years	9.2	8.6	7.8	6.2	6.2		7.7
25 - 45 years	33.3	31.3	33.5	34.0	34.0		29.7
45 - 60 years	10.7	13.4	12.6	10.6	15.8		20.4
60 years and over	6.8	10.3	11.0	11.2	11.4		21.4
cannot be classified	8.0	6.6					
Active persons	52.1	48.6	52.0	52.0	53.1	31.4	49.1
Men	27.9	26.5	27.2	26.5	26.8		29.1
Women	24.2	22.1	25.2	25.5	26.3		20.0
No information on activity	8.0	6.6					
Non-active persons	39.9	44.8	47.6	48.0	46.9	32.5	50.9
of these:	2.9	3.7	2.3	1.2	0.4		22.4+)
Housewives							
Pensioners	7.0	10.9	11.2	12.3	12.5		21.6++)
Children under school-age	13.0	11.5	13.1	13.7	12.9		
Pupils	16.7	16.8	20.0	20.2	20.5		
School leavers without occupation	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3		
Other non-active persons	0.2	1.4	0.6	0.2	0.2		

1) Until October 1990 only to the FRG West, after November 1990 to the East and the West
2) Results of the 1991 microcensus

+) Female non- active persons 20 years old and above
++) Pension receivers excluding pensions for orphanage

Source: Federal Administration Office/Bundesausgleichsamt

from Poland, Romania[1] and the former USSR were accepted by Germany. In this period the significance of the regions of origin changed decisively (as shown in Table 1): in 1989, as in the previous years, the largest numbers came from Poland. In the meantime, their percentage has dropped to 2.5% and the numbers from Romania are no longer significant. Almost all the Aussiedler come from the former USSR at the moment. A constant feature throughout the years was the relatively high number of young people – when compared to the resident German population. This will at least partially offset the ageing and decrease in population in Germany.

3 Repatriation of migrants – not an exclusively German phenomenon

The special situation of the Aussiedler is the result of many factors, e.g. historical development, the conditions in the countries of origin and the economic and legal situation in Germany. The basic phenomenon though, the repatriation of members of an ethnic group to the country from which they originally emigrated has several parallels in history, (consider the return of the Europeans from the colonies), but there are recent examples as well. Many parallels can be found between these problems. The countries affected by this phenomenon are exchanging experiences to facilitate the integration of these immigrants.

Japan for example is experiencing the return of many descendants of the Japanese who emigrated to Brazil and Peru in the twenties. Even this short period created cultural differences. The local Japanese find living with the "Brazilian Japanese" difficult, because they have become too noisy, too "Latin American".

Israel has accepted the largest number of immigrants of the same ethnic origin, when compared to the size of the resident population. In recent years the labour force has increased 4% annually, due to the immigration, of mostly Russian Jews. The problems emerging for the occupational integration of these persons are in essence the same as for the integration of the Aussiedler in Germany.

The situation of migrant workers in Germany who came to work many years ago and are now returning home, can also be compared to that of the Aussiedler in some respects: since the sixties many migrant workers, especially from Turkey, came to Germany. Some of them returned home after many years, often with children who had been born in Germany and who had gone to school there. Vocational and economic (re) integration is in many respects very different. However, there are many parallels regarding social integration both for the older generation – whose maintained concept of their country does not coincide with the reality they experience – and for the younger. Just as is the case with the young Aussiedlers, they live between two cultures and frequently have a closer relationship to the country in which they have grown up than to that of their ancestors.

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[1] Other countries of emigration have been insignificant in numbers since the seventies. In the last five years about 2% of Aussiedler came from the former Czechoslovakia, the former Yugoslavia and Hungary.

4 Integration of the Aussiedler – the many facets of this term

Talking about the integration of immigrants in politics means many different things to different groups. The academic discussion of the meaning of integration is much the same: from a more individual perspective it is assumed that integration means that an immigrant feels at home in his new surroundings and is personally stable.[2] Definitions related to social structures are aimed at equal participation in economic, social and cultural life [3] . They consider integration as achieved only when the characteristic of being an immigrant is of no consequence to economic life, marriage patterns or daily life such as living conditions. Although these two definitions do not contradict, they are based on different demands and time frames.

The following aspects are unanimously underlined by most academic definitions of integration :

- integration is a process. It is frequently described as a phased process, starting with ensuring basic survival up to "internal integration". These phases are not in a chronological sequence, but generally occur simultaneously.

- integration comprises both having economic and social opportunities, for which in our social system occupation is of major importance , as well as having human relationships which are personally balanced and secure.

- in integration one must distinguish between the formal legal aspect and real living conditions. In contrast to other groups of immigrants, s have the same rights as all other German citizens but this, however, does not guarantee smooth integration.

Integration is a complex process that is not really dealt with justly when subdividing it into "vocational", "social", "cultural" or "religious" integration. To analyze and describe this process, however, requires segmentation. The same also applies to this analysis. The manner in which individuals coem to terms with the new environment, adjust to it and are assimilated into it are considered under the title of "social integration" , whereas under "occupational integration" statistics and research results from this important sphere of life are presented.

5 Social integration

Immigrants of German origin come to stay. Most of them give up everything in their countries of origin and do not foresee a return in their plans for the future. They come as

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[2] see Kurt Horstmann: Sozialwissenschatliche Standardterminologie für die Erforschung des Flüchtlingsproblems <Social science standard terminology for research into the refugee issue>, in : AWR-Bulletin 24, 1986,p. 24f

[3] see Paul Lüttinger: Der Mythos der schnellen Integration. Eine empirische Untersuchung zur Integration der Vertriebenen und Flüchtlinge in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland <The myth of rapid integration. An empirical study on the integration of expelled people and refugees in the FRG>, in: Zeitschrift für Soziologie, 15 (1986) 1, p. 21

Germans and in the long run, possibly after several generations, they will certainly become fully integrated in all spheres of life. Initially, however, in many respects their situation is not any different from that of all other migrants. Just as these they experience that many values, behavioural patterns, knowledge and guidelines for behaviour in formal and informal situations acquired throughout their entire socialization, may become obsolete from one day to the next. The fact that many of them were reared with traditional "German" standards and values does not make their integration any easier. According to the experience of many experts, it may even prove to be a handicap.

5.1 Language problems

In the initial period the most serious obstacle to integration is the fact that many Aussiedlers have no or insufficient command of German language. Developments in the post-war era often did not allow handing down the language to the next generation. Only Romania maintained German schools.

Thus for most Aussiedlers, the first step towards integration is participation in a German language course. For children and young people there are special boarding schools or school classes. Because a knowledge of German is a prerequisite for occupational integration, adult Aussiedlers who were formerly working in their countries of origin can participate in courses paid for by the Bundesanstalt für Arbeit. The legal basis for this, as well as for other measures of integrating people into the labour market, is the Arbeitsförderungsgesetz (Employment Promotion Act -AFG). In the past about 80% of the Aussiedler of working age participated in such language courses. As Table 2 shows these amounted to over 100,000 individuals per year.

Originally up to a maximum period of 10 months could be paid for. Until the early nineties this assistance was part of an extensive programme supporting the integration of Aussiedlers. When the numbers of immigrants increased whilst, at the same time, Germany's economic situation deteriorated, this financial assistance was scaled down or cancelled altogether in many areas. This also applied to language courses which were reduced to eight and after January 1993 to six months.

Aussiedlers are strongly motivated to learn or to improve their German, because language is their means of identification as members of German culture. But still courses lasting eight to ten months were insufficient for most people with little education or unfamiliar with learning methods, to acquire enough linguistic competence for daily life. This has been proven in several empirical studies. After the shortening of the courses even more Aussiedlers will have an inadequate foundation to continue learning the language by themselves in the future. This will certainly severely hamper their chances of integration: employment possibilities are limited, participation in cultural life is limited and social contacts will be limited to their own group, i.e. those coming from the same country of origin.

Table 2

Number of Immigrated Active Persons and Aussiedlers' Attendance of Courses Provided By the Bundesanstalt für Arbeit

Year	Number of active persons immigrated	Participants in German language courses	Participants in retraining and further training courses
1987	41,640	23,751	11,067
1988	98,120	79,877	13,079
1989	196,288	155,431	35,273
1990	192,889	175,434	91,365
1991	116,316	117,523	116,331
1992	119,889	100,769	100,602
1993	116,292	106,717	24,866

Source: Bundesanstalt für Arbeit

5.2 Invisible baggage: traditional values, marginality, socialist education

Statements about Aussiedlers' conditions for social integration are almost inevitably generalizations. In Germany the usage of the term "Aussiedler" creates the impression that they are a homogenous group, although their historical backgrounds, conditions for socialization and personal situations are all vastly different.

Nevertheless there are common factors in their living conditions that caused Aussiedlers to have similar convictions and values, which affect their ability to cope with their new surroundings. Almost all investigations on the socio-cultural background of the Aussiedler find that they maintain conservative, traditional, partriarchical values more frequently than the local population[4]. Especially important are family and relations, the undisputed

[4] Both surveys in the mid-seventies as well as recent ones have had the same results. See e.g. Ernst Wagner: Die Aussiedler aus der Tschechoslowakei und aus Südosteuropa – Vergleichende und zusammenfassende Schlußbetrachtungen <Aussiedlers from Czechoslovakia and southeast Europe – comparative and conclusive summary>, in: Wilhelm Arnold (editors): Die Aussiedler in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. 1. Ergebnisbericht – Herkunft, Ausreise, Aufnahme <Aussiedlers in the Federal Republic of Germany. First report on results – origin, emigration, arrival>, Vienna 1980, p. 103 – 148; Wolfgang Lanquillon: Subjektive und individuelle Komponenten des Integrationsprozesses <Subjective and individual factors of the process of integration>, in Hans Harmsen (editor): Die Aussiedler in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. 2.

domination of the husband – despite the employment of women, and values such as obedience, order, punctuality and strict sexual morals. This continuity of "old" values and behaviour is mainly attributed to the Aussiedlers' situation as minorities in their countries of origin. This was also frequently the case in regard to religion. Only by tenaciously clinging to their traditional values, customs and manners could they survive as an ethnic group.[5]

But still the socialist economic and social system had a clear influence, simply because state socialization institutions such as kindergartens, schools and day-care claimed much time and direct personal access. In addition there was uniformity in behavioural norms – despite differing basic orientations – such as emphasis on the community and the significance of discipline and order.

Moving to an environment with other value priorities must not necessarily cause integration problems or a disruption in their flow of life . Personalities adjust to the environment a lifetime long, although those in the lower age groups are more significantly affected. A change in living conditions can also be internalized as an experience enriching the personality. The traditional conservative values attributed to the Aussiedler, however, mean that from the point of view of social psychology, they are not very open to change or coexisting competing values and standards which are typical for our pluralist society[6]. Such basic attitudes make it difficult for Aussiedlers to adapt to the new living conditions.

5.3 The problems of young Aussiedlers

The situation of the young Aussiedler is seen as especially problematic[7]. Sociologists and the staff of integration assistance institutions think that there is a great danger that they

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Ergebnisbericht – Anpassung, Umstellung Eingliederung <Aussiedlers in the Federal Republic of Germany. Second report on results – adaptation, reorientation, integration>, Bad Homburg 1982, p. 238–270; Gesellschaft für Politik- und Sozialforschung, Aussiedler-Monitor qualitativ. Biographien von Aussiedler-Familien <Society for political and social research, qualitative Aussiedler Monitor, Biographies of Aussiedler-families>, Munich 1990; Klaus Boll: Kultur und Lebensweise der Deutschen in der Sowjetunion und von Aussiedlern in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland <Culture and lifestyles of Germans in the Soviet Union and of the Aussiedler in the FRG>, Working report 4 for the research project "Germans in the Soviet Union and the Aussiedler from the USSR in the FRG", Osteuropa-Institut München 1991; Projektgruppe EVA-A: Erfolg und Verlauf der Aneignung neuer Umwelten durch Aussiedler <Success and process of adaptation to new surroundings by Aussiedlers>, working report, op.cit. 1991; Gerhard Jahn, Siegfried Langbein, Jutta Neumann, Ellen Poppke: Aussiedlerkinder in deutschen Schulen <Children of Aussiedlers in German schools>, in M. Bayer (editor): Enttäuschte Erwartungen – aber: sie richten sich ein. Aussiedler in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland <Disappointed expectations – but: they manage. Aussiedlers in the FRG>, Duisburg, 1992, p. 5–35

[5] See W. Lanquillon, op. cit. p. 255

[6] See W. Lanquillon, op cit. p. 253 and Beate Golks: Aspekte des Integrationsprozesses von AussiedlerInnen aus Osteuropa in die Gesellschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland <Aspects of the integration of Aussiedlers from eastern Europe in the society of the FRG>, Berlin, 1991

[7] The most comprehensive study on this subject has been carried out by Line Kossolapow: Aussiedler-Jugendliche. Ein Beitrag zur Integration Deutscher aus dem Osten <Young Aussiedlers. A contribution to the integration of Germans from the East>, Weinheim , 1987; see also Gerhard Bonifer-Dörr: Auf der Suche nach einer anderen Zukunft. Junge Aussiedlerinnen und Aussiedler in Ausbildung und Beruf <Looking for another future. Young Aussiedlers in education and employment>, Heidelberg 1990; Rainer Lange:

will end up caught between all sides unable to establish a sound identity of their own. Migration occurs during a phase of development in which they would normally become independent and progressively detach themselves from the home. This process is suddenly interrupted. Most of the young people were integrated into their country of origin to a greater extent than their parents. They had to leave their friends and come to a country which most of them did not even want to come to, to which they were taken "so the children will be better off later", a country with other ways of life and values in which they did not understand the language. In addition there is uncertainty about their school careers and employment. In this situation family and parents are the only stable element. But they often react to the new situation by shutting themselves off and displaying strict, inflexible behaviour. They think that they have to protect their children from the "lack of moral" and extensive freedom in Germany. The young, on the other hand, want to keep up with "western standards", want to be accepted by their local peers, establish relationships with them and they feel they have to catch up in the field of consumption.[8] At an age in which they are relatively insecure, they have to master a difficult high-wire act: if they remain too attached to the requirements of the family they will become outsiders in their new environment, if they adapt too much to the behaviour and consumption of the young locals, they risk losing the support of the family.

5.4 Integration a "reciprocal social process"?

It is often stressed that a major aspect of integration is that it should not be seen as "assimilation", but as a "reciprocal social process": that the immigrants should not have to adapt to the locals until they become indistinguishable, but that there should be mutual acceptance.

Aussiedlers are prepared to accept the society that they enter. Although they see that values they have hitherto considered important are not as important in Germany, they do not criticize the locals. Both in a study of 1976 [9] and in 1992 [10] they describe Germans as "helpful", "polite", "friendly", "clean" and "non-obtrusive". The last characteristic especially shows the Aussiedlers' effort to see things positively, although many of them feel that they are not accepted in Germany: that they are not accepted as "Germans" (meaning they change from one minority to the next), nor as fellow human beings. That the locals do not approach them is considered rejection, although they are aware of the differing lifestyles and consequently become reserved themselves. It is obvious that working social relationships and positive self-esteem cannot come about easily in a situation of this nature.

Ausiedlungsfolgen und Identitätsprobleme junger Aussiedler <Consequences of immigration and problems of identity of young Aussiedler>, in Caritas 92 (1991) 4, p. 269-272; most of the studies listed in footnote 5 also deal specifically with the situation of young Aussiedlers.

[8] See G. Bonifer-Dörr, op.cit., p. 34 ff.

[9] see. W. Lanquillon op. cit., p. 248 f

[10] See Forschungsgruppe Kommunikation und Sozialanalysen: Ausländer, Aussiedler und Einheimische als Nachbarn (Foreigners, Aussiedlers and locals as neighbours>, Wuppertal, 1992, p. 116

The locals' attitude to the Aussiedler reflects their fear of their own economic situation. This becomes obvious in a comparison over time and between different social groups [11]: in 1988 when the number of Aussiedlers had just started to grow and had not been fully registered by the population, a poll found a positive and open attitude towards Aussiedlers for social and humanitarian motives[12]. This basic attitude had become negative by the time the 1992 poll was carried out. Aussiedlers were now considered a threat in the housing and labour markets. People advocated limiting immigration. Only the young and such that do not see much competition with the Aussiedler, such as civil servants and executives, were less negative[13].

Aussiedlers consider their repatriation as a return to their home country, they want to stay in Germany and are prepared to adjust. How long the process of integration takes and how much of a burden it means for the Aussiedler, depends mostly on the "locals", on their acceptance and their willingness to allow peaceful co-existence.

6 Occupational integration

Social integration is complex and is scarcely quantifiable. For occupational integration there are, however, some criteria revealing the progress of integration . One such criterion may be the employment rate, others are the position held or income - to the extent that these data are available.

As Table 1 shows most adult Aussiedlers coming to Germany had been working in their countries of origin. The percentage of old age pensioners is much lower than for the local population and most of the women had worked. "Non-active persons" were mostly children and young people with their working lives still ahead of them.

The legislation valid until the end of 1992 provided for a relatively extensive programme of financial assistance to permit occupational integration in Germany. Unemployed Aussiedlers who had been working before were entitled to unemployment benefits amounting to the average rate paid to local unemployed, for one year after arrival. If their German was not good enough, they could take a language course for eight months, as described above, and just as locals they could participate in vocational further training or retraining. During these courses they received unemployment benefits, in the case of retraining, for two years.

Most of these provisions have now been rescinded. Aussiedlers receive unemployment benefits for a maximum of six months only and the sum has been drastically reduced. During this time they can participate in a language course **or** a further training course,

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[11] See Gesellschaft für Politik- und Sozialforschung: Einstellungen zu Aussiedlern, Ergebnisse einer Repräsentativbefragung im Februar/März 1992 <Attitudes towards the Aussiedler, results of a representative poll in February/March 1992>, Munich ,1992

[12] Gesellschaft für Politik- und Sozialforschung, op.cit, p. 3

[13] Gesellschaft für Politik- und Sozialforschung, op.cit

which is not really an alternative, if one does not know any German. If an Aussiedler fails to find a job after these six months he is dependent on welfare payments.

6.1 Stages of occupational integration

In Germany until the end of 1992, for many Aussiedlers attending vocational further training or retraining was the second stage to occupational integration after the first introductory stage of "German classes" . Without such courses there was little hope of finding a job suitable to formal qualifications, because in many occupational fields knowledge and skills did not correspond with the German employment requirements. This is due to the different economic, social and educational systems, the different technological level and the markedly different organizational structures of labour. In addition there was almost no demand in Germany for some of the occupations in which these Aussiedlers had been working, such as agriculture, the mining or textile industry.

The number of Aussiedlers participating in such courses is shown in table 2 which is a compilation of the immigration rate, participation in language classes and occupational qualification measures for the various calendar years.

As illustrated in table 3 these courses very effectively helped male Aussiedlers to integrate into the labour market [14]: of the male Aussiedlers leaving vocational qualification courses

Table 3

Number of Persons Receiving Unemployment Benefits After Completing Retraining or Further Training: Comparison of Aussiedlers and Locals

	Number of persons completing courses during the first semester of 1992		Persons receiving unemployment benefits at the end of the second quarter thereafter			
			1992		for comparison 1990	
	Aussiedlers	Locals	Aussiedlers in %	Locals in %	Aussiedler in %	Locals in %
Men	31,069	62,545	20.2	23.2	14	20
Women	40,747	44,398	31.0	19.2	24	16

Source: Bundesanstalt für Arbeit

[14] This analysis, just as most other figures, relates to the west of the Federal Republic, because only few Aussiedlers are to be found in the new Laender due to the situation there; in 1990 about 250 had settled there, 1992 it was 14% of those repatriating. In addition consistent statistics are only available for the west of the FRG.

in the first semester of 1992 only 20% were still receiving unemployment benefits six months later (at the end of the second quarter), which was slightly less than for local men (23%). In 1990, when the labour market situation had been better still , the difference between Aussiedlers and locals was even more pronounced, at 6%.[15]

The situation is different for women, though: in 1992 female Aussiedlers had by far the highest rate of benefit payments, 31% received unemployment benefits for about six months after leaving the further training course and the situation was not much better in 1990. The percentage of local female course participants receiving benefits afterwards was much lower.

If the logic of further training or retraining is to be measured by its success, expressed by the rate of employment, only male Aussiedlers should participate in such courses, because women do not seem to profit from them very much. Here one might ask: If they hadn't? How much worse would the employment rate of female Aussiedlers be, if they had not had the opportunity to participate in such classes?

With regard to the general trends an empirical study of the IAB can answer this question. A representative sample of Aussiedlers - about 3000 individuals - were interviewed for the first time whilst attending a German class in May 1991 and a second time after finishing the class. This study showed that the integration problems of female Aussiedlers indicated not only by this study, but by all other data available on the matter, are not only due as often stated, to "family obligations", but equally to the occupations they formerly had.[16]

The integration potential according to the occupational area is the topic of the following chapter.

6.2 Integration and its problems in the various occupational fields

The second round of interviews for the IAB's empirical study took place in the autumn of 1991. At this time most people interviewed had finished the German classes roughly 3 months earlier. Although 30% had a job, these were distributed very unevenly between the sexes: 46% of the men and only 17% of the women had work. The family situation affected the employment rate very little, because for women without children it was only 21%. Instead an analysis of the former occupations of the women was much better suited to explain the big difference in the employment of men and women. This - and not so much sex - determined whether they found employment after the German class, whether they had attended further training or retraining or became unemployed.

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[15] The statistics only tell about the number of people who received unemployment benefits. This does not mean,though, that the difference to 100%, i.e. say 80% of Aussiedlers were really in employment.We can, however, assume this for most cases, because generally Aussiedlers were entitled to unemployment benefits in case of unemployment in the years for which the analysis was made.

[16] The first results of this study are explained in: Barbara Koller: Aussiedler nach dem Deutschkurs: Welche Gruppen kommen rasch in Arbeit? <Aussiedlers after German language courses: which groups find jobs fast?>, in: Mitteilungen aus der Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung, 26 (1993) 2, p. 207 - 221.

When the study was made in 1991 there was still a demand for labour in many blue-collar occupations in Germany. The Aussiedler benefitted from this. According to the IAB-study between 51% and 65% of those with occupations in the construction industry, electricians, joiners, painters and turners had found a job three months after the language class, most of them in their former occupations. For women the rate was almost the same, but very few women came from these fields.

The labour market situation was detrimental for the textile industry. This mainly concerned the women among the Aussiedlers for only 24% of them had found a job and of these less than half were working in their original occupation.

Aussiedlers, again mainly women, with occupations closely related to the economic and social system requiring a good command of the language, had very bleak prospects, independent of the general labour market situation. This mainly concerned female Aussiedlers who had been working in the social and educational field or who had clerical training. The situation was worst for women who had worked in administration and offices, only 9% of those interviewed found a job after the language class and only one of them in her former occupational field. 50% of individuals with such occupations had started vocational further training directly after the language classes and in the following months their numbers grew.

Engineers, 43% of these women, were most strongly represented at 57% among the participants of further training after the German classes. In the view of many employers they generally needed to adapt considerably to meet the requirements of working in Germany. Only 10% of them found a job directly after the German classes.

Hardly any jobs are available in Germany for Aussiedlers who worked in mining (almost exclusively men) or agriculture (about the same number of men and women). Despite this their employment rate was about the same as the average for all interviewees and their participation in courses for further qualifications was below average. Obviously this group had already expected that they would be required to find another type of job. If they did participate in training courses, it was for retraining in the most diverse fields. Those holding jobs worked in many different areas with many unskilled labourers.

The occupational situation of the Aussiedler three months after the language class can be summarized as follows: both employment rate and participation rate in further training and retraining depended on the occupational group. Generally almost all occupational groups with low employment figures were strongly represented in the courses for qualification and vice versa (in addition there were unemployed individuals in each occupational group). These results indicate that the Aussiedler were not participating in qualifying training to delay having to work, but only when they saw little opportunity of employment in keeping with their skills. Many Aussiedlers have from the start contented themselves with jobs below their level of skills .

These results coincide with the experience of the employment offices: in recent years they reported that male Aussiedlers from many blue-collar occupations stand good chances of

finding a job even without further qualification and that they have seized the opportunities. On the other hand, for many university graduates and communication-related services which were carried out mainly by women, there were hardly any prospects for adequate employment without prior training. The above analysis of the statistics of the Bundesanstalt für Arbeit illustrates that the integration rates were relatively good after these further training or retraining measures.

6.3 The Aussiedlers' integration in the labour market in recent years

As stated above most of the integration assistance payments for Aussiedlers were stopped at the beginning of 1993 when the general labour market situation in Germany had deteriorated. In 1993 only 25,000 Aussiedlers could participate in further training or retraining (in the year before there were 100,000) and most of them started training in the early months of the year when transition provisions still applied. The figures for 1994 will be even lower. In the first six months of 1994 only 8,518 Aussiedlers undertook training of this nature.

The above results indicate that vocational qualification was often the first stage of integration for entire occupational fields. This is no longer available and at the same time the general labour market situation in Germany deteriorated. Thus a drastic increase in unemployment among Aussiedlers should be expected in the last eighteen months. This assumption is not confirmed by the statistics, though.

Table 4 illustrates that unemployment figures for the total population in the western FRG grew even more than for the Aussiedler.

This result came about despite the poor labour market situation, the cuts in language courses and comprehensive restrictions in vocational qualification. This seems to indicate that not all unemployed Aussiedlers are represented in the statistics. However, there are few indications to support this, because unemployed Aussiedlers are usually dependent on public money (either unemployment benefits or welfare). If they are capable of working they only receive these benefits if they are registered as unemployed, i.e. looking for work, with the employment offices.

The fact that unemployment grew less amongst the Aussiedler does not mean that they find jobs easier than local labour, because the following must be considered:

- no exact unemployment rate can be calculated for the Aussiedler, because it is not known, how many are in work (and the rate represents the ratio of unemployed to the active population, i.e. employed plus unemployed). The few indications there are show that in the year of reference Aussiedlers were clearly more affected by unemployment than the local population , i.e. it is a smaller increase starting at a higher level;

- this relatively positive development does not apply to female Aussiedlers. The percentage of unemployed female Aussiedlers is even rising;

Table 4

Development of Unemployment Figures For the Total Population and for Aussiedlers in the West of the FRG Related to January 1991

	Total number of unemployed in the West of the FRG		Unemployed Aussiedlers in the West of the FRG	
	absolute	in % compared to Jan. 1991	absolute	in % compared to Jan. 1991
1991				
Unemployed in				
January	1,873,989	100.0	152,870	100.0
March		92.4		93.6
October		85.3		84.4
1992				
Unemployed in				
March	1,767,856	94.3	131,060	85.7
October		97.7		89.0
December		108.1		94.3
1993				
Unemployed in				
March	2,223,386	118.6	152,553	99.8
June		115.6		102.3
July		124.1		109.6
August		123.5		113.4
October		125.9		115.1
December		134.9		122.7
1994				
Unemployed in				
January	2,736,068	146.0	182,311	119.3
February		146.3		116.6
March		140.9		112.5
April		138.2		108.0
May		133.7		104.1
June		132.2		102.7
July		137.2		102.3
August		135.0		100.3
September		130.9		96.8

– most important is that many of them are only employed, because they are prepared to take anything, even such jobs that are well below their training levels. This was also the case at times when it was easier to participate in vocational qualification measures. Now that the possibilities of adapting vocational qualifications to German requirements have become so severely restricted, the representatives of entire occupational groups may be deprived of the opportunity of working in their original occupation and will have resort to inferior jobs.

7 Summary and outlook

Aussiedlers from the former Eastern Block countries are considered Germans according to the German constitution. Once in Germany they enjoy the same rights and obligations as any German citizen. Although this initially makes it easier for them in Germany, there are still many impediments to social and occupational integration.

A major obstacle for integration in all spheres of life is the fact that many Aussiedlers speak poor or inadequate German. This is a consequence of the post-war era when the German language the Aussiedlers' predecessors had preserved over the centuries, could not be passed on adequately to the subsequent generation.

Aussiedlers can improve their German by attending classes in Germany. However, the maximum length of these classes was reduced from originally ten to (since January 1993) six months, although the language skills of the newer Aussiedlers are becoming poorer every year.

It is not only poor language skills that impede integration, but also the special nature of the Aussiedlers' socialization. In their countries of origin they were marginated. To preserve their identity they clung to traditional "German" standards and values which are not dominant in Germany anymore. They find it difficult to adapt to the greater freedom in Germany and the value system characterized by plurality. This flexibility is demanded of them while their entire lifestyle is highly uncertain. The young people among the Aussiedler are the most severely affected by this new situation which requires brinkmanship in order to meet their parents' requirements and adapt to the new environment.

As far as occupational integration is concerned an extensive range of assistance programmes used to be available in the past which proved to be necessary and helpful. Because of the different technology level and different economic and educational systems, the Aussiedlers' knowledge and skills do not meet German requirements. Aussiedlers were provided with the financial means of participating in courses to adapt their vocational skills to the demands of the German labour market or to retrain in another occupation. Aussiedlers not participating in such training frequently took up jobs that were below the level of their formal qualifications.

In recent years the economic situation in Germany has deteriorated and at the same time at the beginning of 1993 the start-up assistance for Aussiedlers was restricted . Nevertheless unemployment rose less for Aussiedlers than for the local population. Although there are

no statistics on the type of employment the Aussiedler have accepted, it is almost certain that this relatively small increase in unemployment means that more Aussiedlers accepted jobs below their level of qualifications. Hence they are still threatened by unemployment in the long-term because in the past the highest unemployment rates always involved people in un-skilled or semi-skilled jobs. In addition all forecasts for future working environment are unanimous in their statement that less and less labour will be required for unskilled jobs.

The development of the numbers of new Aussiedlers depends on the political, social and economic conditions in their countries of origin and the economic and legal situation in Germany. The federal government wants to keep the option for repatriation open – there are still about 2 m ethnic Germans in the former USSR according to the 1989 census – and at the same time assist ethnic Germans in their areas of settlement. This means supporting institutions to maintain and promote German language and culture and economic projects in areas with large numbers of ethnic Germans. The entire region, not only the ethnic German population, is to benefit from all of these assistance measures. The number of ethnic Germans being enticed to remain in their respective countries because of the support there and restrictions in regard to assistance in Germany is still an open question. For the years to come it can be assumed that there will be no fewer than 220,000 individuals per year as defined by law in 1993.

How successful they are on the labour market will depend on the economic situation and the initial assistance for occupational integration available. Hopefully financial assistance for vocational help for Aussiedlers will be stepped up again when the financial situation of the public household improves, so they can use their vocational experience and repatriation does not automatically mean a downgrading of social life and career.

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